



## Global learning opportunities through partnerships



WHEN IT COMES TO GLOBAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, CASTLEMAINE SECONDARY COLLEGE IS AT THE CUTTING EDGE. STEVE HOLDEN REPORTS.

A partnership between Castlemaine Secondary College and the Castlemaine State Festival gave students an opportunity to work with world-renowned artist, Heri Dono last month.

Indonesian-born Dono's multidisciplinary practice includes performance, installation, painting, printmaking, sound and sculpture. Castlemaine students learning Indonesian from Years 7 to 12 and art from Years 7 to

10 worked with Dono to create and print images to fill 225 windows in the 1880s Continuing Education building in Castlemaine as part of April's Castlemaine State Festival.

'The project provided a good synergy with the school's philosophy of giving students global learning opportunities,' explained Castlemaine Secondary College art teacher Clayton Tremlett.

'In the past 12 months, the school has developed, or is the process of developing, partnerships with schools in France, Indonesia and New Zealand, as well as a Friends of Timor Group,' Tremlett said. These partnerships provide a gateway for global learning opportunities.'

The school's evolving work has been recognised by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, which has selected the school as one of 20 in the state to conduct trials that will inform state policy on intercultural studies. The field trial will stimulate thinking, capture current innovative practices, identify next practice and share findings across the system.

It's no coincidence that the April Castlemaine State Festival was called *Pressing Issues*, said Tremlett: Central Victoria is home to the highest concentration of print artists in the country.

*Pictured, Castlemaine Secondary College students creating images during the school's with Heri Dono for April's Castlemaine State Festival.*

*Photo by Max Lesser.*

## REGISTER YOUR SCHOOL NOW FOR JEANS FOR GENES DAY Friday 5th August, 2011



This year's event is more exciting than ever with lots of competitions, challenges and great prizes to be won.

All you have to do is register your school, wear your jeans and make a donation to the cause. Jeans for Genes is a major national fundraiser for the Children's Medical Research Institute. Each year, more than two million Australians donate much needed funds to support vital genetic research to advance the prevention and treatment of disease, leading to healthier generations of children.





# School funding debate warms up

THE COMMONWEALTH REVIEW OF FUNDING FOR SCHOOLING CHAIRED BY DAVID GONSKI RECEIVED PLENTY OF ADVICE FROM STAKEHOLDERS WHEN SUBMISSIONS CLOSED AT THE END OF MARCH. EXACTLY WHAT THE PANEL WILL RECOMMEND REMAINS TO BE SEEN, BUT ONE THING IS CERTAIN, THE DEBATE ON SCHOOL FUNDING IS WARMING UP.

**STEVE HOLDEN REPORTS.**

The Australian Education Union in its submission called for 'a funding model which funds public and non-government schools separately and ends the current inequitable linkage through the (Average Government School Recurrent Costs) AGSRC. Breaking the nexus between public and private school funding through the AGSRC, and funding private schools through a discrete and finite budget line is an essential condition of a new, equitable funding system.'

The Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) in its submission called for 'a student-based approach to assessing need for the purposes of a school funding model.'

According to the ISCA submission, 'A student-based methodology which relies on robust data regarding student characteristics provides an effective and transparent means to determine the resourcing needs of individual schools.'

Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) likewise recommended that 'funding should be centred on students, not schools.' According

to the ISV submission, 'the simplest, most transparent and effective way to fund students is to apply equal treatment to students regardless of sector.'

The Christian Schools Association (CSA) proposed "'fully-funded" non-government schools as part of the funding mix.' According to the CSA submission, 'In such a model, community-based non-profit organisations could be licensed by government to provide educational services to meet specific needs in an identified location, with funding equivalent to that provided for educational services in government run (state) schools in a similar situation. Such schools would be subject to additional funding requirements on top of those required of existing non-government providers.' *Daily Telegraph* journalist Jenny Dillon compared the CSA's fully-funded model to the controversial charter school model in the United States.

Both major parties also weighed in to the school funding debate, a sure sign that the political stakes are high. The opinion pages of the *Australian* ran pieces in April by both

the Commonwealth Minister for School Education Peter Garrett and his Opposition counterpart Christopher Pyne.

'Is it a coincidence that since the My School website was relaunched..., the usual suspects of the Left have used the site to support a new attack on public funding of non-government schools?' asked Pyne.

'My School 2.0 will inform the nature and quality of the debate about school funding; it's meant to,' Garrett replied. 'We can end division and create a fair funding system only by recognising the legitimate claims of participants on all sides and by not letting longstanding ideological positions stand in the way of a good policy outcome.'

The *Commonwealth's Schools Assistance Amendment (Financial Assistance) Act 2011*, passed in March, extends the existing funding arrangement until the end of 2013, and capital expenditure until 2014.

Gonski's panel will provide its final report to the Commonwealth government later this year.

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